

## Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 INRE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 DPW-01 OMB-01 AID-20

RSR-01 EB-11 AGR-20 SR-02 ORM-03 TRSE-00 /173 W

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O P 271035 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0645

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USIA WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 2787

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y ( T E X T )

E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, CB  
SUBJ: KHMER REPORT - MARCH 27, 1973

JOINT EMBASSY/DAO

GENERAL

1. LON NOL AND HIS ADVERSARIES MANEUVERED AGAINST EACH OTHER INDECISIVELY DURING THE WEEK. SIRIK MATAK, PLACED UNDER A MILD FORM OF HOUSE ARREST, TOOK THE BOLDEST ACTION BY DECLARING IN AN INTERVIEW JUST NOW AVAILABLE IN PHNOM PENH THAT THE PRESENT REGIME MUST NOT AND CANNOT SURVIVE AND THAT SIHANOUK IS NOW MORE POPULAR THAN LOESS IN THIS WAY, IF NOT THROUGH EARLIER INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE FOREIGN PRESS.

REGARDING THE EDITORIAL PUBLISHED BY THE NEWSPAPER "INFORMACIONES" ON THE 5 TH OF THIS MONTH -- IT EXPRESSES ONLY THE NEWSPAPER'S OPINIONS, WITH A DISTORTED VIEW OF THE SPANISH- AMERICAN NAVAL RELATIONS, DUE IN MY JUDGMENT, TO THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE AGREEMENTS IN FORCE WHICH COVER THEM, AND WHICH BECAUSE OF THEIR PRIVATE CHARACTER, WERE NOT MADE PUBLIC. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE SPANISH NAVY DOES NOT SHARE SUCH OPINIONS, WHICH DO NOT CONFORM TO ITS OWN FEELINGS ABOUT THE CORDIALITY OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE AMERICAN NAVY.

THE NAVY'S POSITION IN THIS MATTER, UNDOUBTEDLY KNOWN TO YOUR EXCELLENCY AS CO- PRESIDENT OF THE JOINT SPANISH- AMERICAN COMMITTEE, IS THAT IN BRIEF IT IS A PROBLEM OF CARRYING THROUGH THE AGREEMENTS. ITS SOLUTION LIES NOT SO MUCH IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXTS SIGNED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS AS IN THE GOODWILL THAT HAS ALWAYS PREVAILED BETWEEN BOTH NAVIES IN CARRYING THEM OUT. THIS IS

CONFIRMED BY THE PROGRESS THAT WE ARE MAKING TO GET A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION.

RECEIVE, MR. AMBASSADOR, THE TESTIMONY OF MY DISTINGUISHED CONSIDERATION. SIGNED ADOLFO BATURONE. END TEXT.

3. TRANSLATION OF TEXT OF CHIEF OF STAFF' S REPLY OF MARCH 17 IS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT: MY RESPECTED AND DEAR AMBASSADOR, I HAVE READ WITH INTEREST THE ARTICLE FROM THE NEWSPAPER  
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" INFORMACIONES" OF MADRID OF MARCH THE 5 TH, ENCLOSED WITH YOUR LETTER OF THE 12 TH, TO WHICH I REPLY WITH THE SINCERITY WHICH PREVAILS AND WHICH I HOPE WILL CONTINUE TO PREVAIL IN OUR RELATIONS.

AS YOU ARE FULLY AWARE, THE PRESS IS FREE IN OUR COUNTRY, EVEN MUCH MORE SO THAN WE ARE CREDITED FOR BY LARGE SECTORS OF FOREIGN PUBLIC OPINION. MANY TIMES WE ARE DISAGREEABLY SURPRISED BY ERRONEOUS -- IF NOT TENDENTIOUS -- NES OR COMMENTS IN THE NATIONAL AND FOREIGN PRESS, WHICH WE HAVE TO ACCEPT AS A TRIBUTE TO THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS OF OUR WESTERN WORLD.

BELIEVE ME, DEAR ADMIRAL, THAT NEITHER THIS EDITORIAL, NOR OTHER ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN OUR NEWSPAPERS, REFLECT IN ANY WAY THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE NAVY, ALTHOUGH I WOULD LACK SINCERITY NOT TO ADMIT THAT IT CONSTITUTES, TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, THE FEELINGS OF SOME OFFICIALS AND CIVILIANS WHO JUDGE ONLY BY APPEARANCES.

ANOTHER QUITE DIFFERENT OPINION IS THAT OF A MORE RESPONSIBLE SECTOR WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT ABOVE ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES THE INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN NAVY, ITS UNDERSTANDING OF OUR PROBLEMS, THE ASSISTANCE IT GIVES US, FOR WHICH I ONCE AGAIN EXPRESS MY MOST SINCERE AND DEEP GRATITUDE.

IN RELATION SPECIFICALLY TO THE PENDING DELIVERY OF THE THREE DESTROYERS, WE HAVE ACCEPTED UNRESERVEDLY YOUR EXPLANATIONS AND IT IS ENCOURAGING THAT THIS AND OTHER MATTERS ARE BEING SOLVED WITH THE SAME MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND WARM FRIENDSHIP.

THE SENTIMENTS WHICH YOU CORRECTLY ATTRIBUTE TO ME, ARE SHARED BY THE MAJORITY OF OUR OFFICERS, AS CAN EASILY

BE SHOWN IN THE MANY CONTACTS WE MAINTAIN.

HOPING THAT I HAVE CLARIFIED OUR POSITION REGARDING  
THIS EDITORIAL, I RESPECTIFULLY SEND YOU WARM REGARDS.  
SIGNED GABRIEL PITA DA VEIGA, ADMIRAL. END TEXT.  
RIVERO

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 INRE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

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AGR-20 EB-11 SR-02 ORM-03 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /173 W

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O P 271035 Z MAR 73  
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0646  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
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7 TH PSYOPS  
COMUSSAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 2787

GRUNK/ FUNK

10. SIHANOUK READ HIS 42 ND MESSAGE TO THE NATION WHICH WAS TIMED TO THE MARCH 23 THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF FUNK, THE CPNLAF AND THE FIVE POINTS, AND DATELINED SHANGHAI. THE SPEECH IS AS HARD- LINE AS OTHER RECENT STATEMENTS. HE ASSERTS THAT THE U. S. IS THE CAUSE OF THE WARE IN CAMBODIA AND IS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO PEACE BECAUSE IT REFUESES TO NEGOTIATE WITH GRUNK AND CONTINUES TO SUPPORT LON NOL. HE PROMISES CONTINUED STRUGGLE UNTIL THE COMPLETE LIBERATION CAMBODIA. ONE OF

MATAK' S CLOSE COLLABORATORS, TEP KHUNNAH, NARROWLY ESCAPED A HAND GRENADE ATTACK. THE MARSHAL SUBSEQUENTLY GAVE KHUNNAH PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. FIFTEEN PRINCES AND PRINCESSES REMAIN UNDER ARREST AND AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF STUDENT AND TEACHER ACTIVISTS REMAIN IN HIDING OR UNDER ARREST. GENERAL NORODOM CHANTARANGSEY REPORTEDLY REFUSED A SUMMONS BY MARSHAL LON NOL, BUT THE CONFRONTATION WAS SOFTENED WHEN HE AGREED TO DROP THE ROYAL NAME OF NORODOM. MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS MARKED BY NEW KHMER INSURGENT ATTACKS AGAINST MAJOR GOVERNMENT LINES OF COMMUNICATION-

-  
THE MEKONG RIVER CORRIDOR, ROUTES 1, 4 AND 5. GOVERNMENT FORCES SUCCEEDED IN CLEARING ENEMY FROM RTE 2 BETWEEN PHNOM PENH AND TAKEO; FIGHTING CONTINUED IN SOUTHERN MR2. THE MEKONG RIVER  
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CONVOY SCHEDULED FOR DEPARTURE TO PHNOM PENH ON 27 MARCH WAS POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.

POLITICAL ( INTERNAL)

2. THE HEAD OF THE PRO- SIRIK MATAK INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION, TEP KHUNNAH, NARROWLY ESCAPED DEATH ON MARCH 25 WHEN TWO RIDERS ON A HONDA MOTORCYCLE PLACED A GRENADE IN KHUNNAH'S JEEP AS IT PASSED THE KOREAN EMBASSY. KHUNNAH THREW THE GRENADE INTO THE STREET, WHERE IT EXPLODED, INJURING TWO BYSTANDERS AND SLIGHTLY WOUNDING KHUNNAH. KHUNNAH TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE HAD HAD INTIMATIONS OF AN IMPENDING ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT FROM AN INFORMANT IN THE ORGANIZATION OF LON NON, HIS BITTER POLITICAL ENEMY. KHUNNAH WAS SUMMONED MARCH 26 WITH FOLLOW MATAKIST SENG BUN KORN TO CHAMCAR MON, WHERE KHUNNAH WAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO GO ABROAD. KHUNNAH PLANS TO LEAVE FOR PARIS SHORTLY.

3. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVED ON MARCH 31 THE STATE OF NATIONAL DANGER AS REQUIRED BY THE CONSTITUTION. ON MARCH 26 MARSHAL LON NOL SIGNED A DECREE, APPLICABLE DURING THE STATE OF SEIGE, PROVIDING PENALTIES OF DEMOTION OR DISMISSAL FOR CIVIL SERVANTS GUILTY OF INDISCIPLINE, DISRESPECT, FOR AUTHORITY, CORRUPTION, OPIUM SMOKING, GAMBLING, AND SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY.

4. THE MARSHAL ON MARCH 26 DECREED THE CREATION OF A " PERSONAL CABINET OF THE MARSHAL" TO BE DIRECTED BY A GENERAL ASNPET UNNAMED AND CONSISTING OF A SMALL GROUP OF ADVISERS. PHNOM PENH RADIO PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED THAT A PLAN TO " RESHUFFLE AND OVER-HAUL" THE GROUP OF PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANTS HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED AS ONE OF THE 16 POINTS PRESENTED TO THE PARLIAMENT BY PRIME MINISTER HANG THUN HAK IN RESPONSE TO THE DEMANDS OF THE STRIKING TEACHERS. ON MARCH 27 THE PARLIAMENT ELECTED THE MEMBERS OF THE " STATE CONTROL", A BODY PROVIDED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATING CASES OF CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF POWER. PROMPT ELECTION OF THIS BODY WAS ANOTHER OF THE 16 POINTS OF HANG THUN HAK. THE DELAY IN THE CREATION OF THIS BODY HAD ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO RULE BY DECREE, A RIGHT NOW EXTENDED BY THE STATE OF DANGER.

5. LT. GENERAL SISOWATH SIRIK MATAK WAS PLACED UNDER A MILD FORM OF HOUSE ARREST, AN INITIAL GUARD OF SOME 200 TROOPS HAVING

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BEEN REDUCED THE NEXT DAY TO ABOUT THE USUAL (#) HIS TELEPHONE LINES WERE CUT(#) HE NEVERTHELESS GAVE AN INTERVIEW WITH CORRESPONDENTS OF THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE VOA IN WHICH HE DECLARED THAT THE TIME WHEN THE POPULARITY OF THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT COULD BE RESTORED HAD PASSED AND THAT SIHANOUK IS NOW MORE POPULAR THAN LON NOL AND SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO CAMBODIA. MATAK DISCLAIMED ANY INTENTION OF LEAVING THE COUNTRY.

6. AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF REGIME OPPONENTS REMAIN UNDER ARREST OR IN HIDING, AND A FEW HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS HAVING JOINED THE ENEMY. BRIG. GENERAL NORODOM CHANTARANGSEY REPORTEDLY REFUSED A SUMMONS TO THE MARSHAL AND PREPARED TO DEFEND HIMSELF AGAINST A GOVERNMENT POSSE AUGMENTED WITH APC' S, BUT AN UNEASY TRUCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THIS NEXT MOST PROMINENT REPUBLICAN EX- PRINCE NOW PREVAILS. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION DESCRIBED HIS AS A FRIEND OF THE REPUBLIC AND CHANTARANGSEY AT THE REQUEST OF LON NOL BEGAN LEGAL STEPS TO DROP THE RO  
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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 27 MAR 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Authority:** boyleja  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** CORE6  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, PINS, CB  
**To:** EA  
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO BANGKOK  
CANBERRA  
COPENHAGEN  
MULTIPLE  
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